

**STILLWATER COUNTY
COMMISSIONER MINUTES**

<p>Notice: These minutes reflect the proceedings of the Board of County Commissioners. The official minutes are on file with the Clerk and Recorder MCA 7-4-2611(2)(b).</p>
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**REGULAR MEETING
July 13, 2021**

PRESENT	Commissioner Mark Crago, Chair, Commissioners Tyrel Hamilton and Steve Riveland, members; Shannon Fisher Admin Assistant. Others Present: Kevin Ray, Road & Bridge; Penny Redli, Museum; Jen Hoines, HR; Chip Kem, SCSO; Maureen Wiltshire, DES; Marlo Pronovost, Stillwater County News; Citizens: Jen France, Maurie Petterson, Sandy Helmuth, Shirlee Keffer
PLEDGE	Commissioner Crago opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.
MINUTES	None presented.
CLAIMS	None presented
ANNOUNCEMENTS	Maureen Wiltshire announced that the County is still in Stage II Fire Restrictions. The haziness in the County is from the fires in Musselshell and Yellowstone Counties. There are some fire departments from the county that have been helping with those fires. There are currently no fires in Stillwater County. Commissioner Crago noted that the 4-H fair is currently underway in Stillwater County.
CONSENT AGENDA	<u>Commission</u> A) Ambulance District #1 board appointment for one vacancy for term ending June 2024.
FILE ITEMS	<u>Justice Court</u> A) Monthly report for June in the amount of \$14,265.15. Commissioner Hamilton MOVED to consent to the consent agenda and file the file items. Commissioner Riveland SECONDED . Discussion – Commissioner Hamilton noted that the appointment to the ambulance district is James Mandeville. Commissioner Crago added that there is still one vacancy on the ambulance district board. Marlo Pronovost asked where someone would get an application to apply for the position. Commissioner Crago replied that you could obtain an application from the county website or the Commissioners office. <u>Motion passed unanimously</u>
REGULAR BUSINESS	<u>Commission</u> A) One year contract renewal with Stillwater Historical Society for records storage in the amount of \$35,000.00. Commissioner Riveland MOVED to approve the one-year contract renewal with Stillwater Historical Society for records storage in the amount of \$35,000.00. Commissioner Hamilton SECONDED . Discussion – Commissioner Crago noted that this is for the continued storage of records that were housed in the West Annex and from the 4 th floor of the courthouse. <u>Motion passed unanimously</u> . B) Sheriff’s records, tax assessment and assessors records project with the Stillwater Historical Society in the amount of \$23,750.00. Commissioner Hamilton MOVED to approve Sheriff’s records, tax assessment and assessors records project with the Stillwater Historical Society in the amount of \$23,750.00. Commissioner Riveland SECONDED . Discussion.

Commissioner Crago explained that the tax assessment and assessor records are records that remained in the West Annex and records from the 4th floor of the courthouse that needed to be moved to the museum. Penny Redli further explained that there is past Sheriff's correspondence that needs to be assessed and archived with the rest of the Sheriff's records currently being stored at the museum. The assessors records currently being stored in the attic on the 4th have been requested to be viewed and the attic is not a suitable place for the public to view the records. This money will allow the museum staff to clean and store the records in archival boxes. Commissioner Crago stated that there are letters of support from the Sheriff and the county staff records preservation person. Motion passed unanimously.

C) Drought Declaration Resolution 2021-17. Commissioner Riveland **MOVED** to approve the Drought Declaration Resolution 2021-17. Commissioner Hamilton **SECONDED**. Discussion – Commissioner Crago explained that the drought committee met on July 6, 2021 and assessed the current water situation throughout the county. The southern portion of the county is showing the highest level of drought on the drought indicators. Part of the county is in a D3 status and part of the county is in a D2 status. Lee Schmelzer, member of the drought committee believed that most of this county will be in the D3 status. Irrigated hay crops are at 35% of normal yield. Dryland hay crops are basically nonexistent due to excessive heat, lack of water and grasshoppers. The drought declaration will help the county ranchers and businesses affected by the drought by putting them in a position to apply for state and federal aid. Governor Gianforte has the State of Montana under a drought disaster declaration along with 33 other counties with Stillwater County as the 34th county. The last drought declaration for Stillwater County was in 2012. This year's pattern is very similar to 2012. Motion passed unanimously.

Economic Development

Meadows Subdivision 8 final plat was removed from the agenda and no action was taken and motion to approve was removed.

A) ARPA competitive grant application for new fairgrounds. Commissioner Hamilton **MOVED** to approve the ARPA competitive grant application for new fairgrounds. Commissioner Riveland **SECONDED**. Discussion – Stephanie Ray commented that this is a competitive grant application for the fairground's infrastructure. Through the American Reinvestment Recovery Act there is a callout for water, sewer and stormwater infrastructure applications throughout Montana. Stillwater County will be sending in two applications of which this one is the first. This will cover the mobilization survey, water, sewer, storm and fire suppression for infrastructure development at the new fairgrounds/civic center site. The county has a good opportunity to be competitive with this application given how advanced it is in the planning process. Commissioner Hamilton added that this will be used for the stormwater and site development with no vertical infrastructure. This does not commit the county to any building of vertical infrastructure and the funds do not need to be utilized until 2026. Motion passed unanimously.

B) ARPA competitive grant application for new law & justice center. Commissioner Riveland **MOVED** to approve the ARPA competitive grant application for new law & justice center. Commissioner Hamilton **SECONDED**. Discussion – Stephanie Ray explained that this is the second competitive grant application and this is for a new law and justice center infrastructure piece. This will cover the mobilization survey, water and sewer connectivity, stormwater, curb, gutter, sidewalk and road rehabilitation. All site development and infrastructure with no vertical development. The county has committed to do as much work as possible to bring grant funds into the county to help facilitate the funding being discussed relating to all of the capital infrastructure projects. This is a good competitive grant application. The county has been working with the City of Columbus, who is also submitting grant applications and will be collaborating on tying some of the infrastructure work together. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to get this level of infrastructure reinvestment. Commissioner Hamilton asked when the applications are due, when is the estimated award date and how much can Stillwater County apply for. Stephanie Ray replied that the competitive grants can be applied for up to \$25,000,000.00 per competitive grant application.

The county does not currently have that level of need. The law and justice center request is for 1.18 million dollars and the fairgrounds is for 2 million dollars. The applications are due July 15, 2021. The timeline for this round of funding is very aggressive. 115 competitive applications were received by the state on Friday. The second round of grant allocation will be offered in January of 2022. Stephanie further stated that she is not sure what that round of funding will look like yet, whether it will be for vertical development or if it will stay with infrastructure and site development funding. The next round of applications the county will be focused on will be for broadband infrastructure. Motion passed unanimously.

Road & Bridge

A) Appoint viewers & set date for proposed abandonment of Swindler Road. Commissioner Hamilton asked if Swindler Road was in the north portion of the county. Kevin Ray responded it is north of Reed Point. Commissioner Hamilton **MOVED** to appoint viewers & set date for proposed abandonment of Swindler Road with the viewers to be Tyrel Hamilton, Kevin Ray and Heidi Stadel with a date of July 21, 2021 and set a public hearing date of August 10, 2021. Commissioner Riveland **SECONDED**. Discussion – Commissioner Crago clarified that the viewers Commissioner Hamilton, Clerk & Recorder Stadel and Kevin Ray from Road & Bridge will view the road on July 21, 2021 with a public hearing on the proposed abandonment on August 10, 2021. Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON COUNTY BUSINESS – Shirlee Keffer, on behalf of Politics and Eggs Breakfast hosted by the Stillwater Republican Women, thanked Commissioners Crago and Riveland for their presence along with the presentation given by Jason. 51 guests attended with representation from all but Fishtail and Nye. The question-and-answer session went very well and enlightened many regarding the proposed projects.

Sandy Helmuth thanked the Commissioners for the information regarding elevate. Sandy stated that he would like to see more public meetings. Some people had no idea what this was until they received it in the mail. Notices mailed to the same people would provide a lot of public input and a lot of information that they don't currently understand. Evening meetings would be better. Commissioner Crago responded that there will be a booth set up all week at the 4H fair for citizens to ask questions. Stephanie Ray added that there may be a few gaps but they are trying to man the booth from 8 to 5. There will also be a booth setup at the farmers market on Thursday. There was a booth set up at Nye goes nuts and there will be a booth set up at Absarokee Days on July 24, 2021. An event is being coordinated for the first week in August in Rapelje and there is no date set yet for Park City days. Commissioner Crago stated that there was a meeting last Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. at the fairgrounds and two citizens showed up. Sandy stated that if invitations for these events were mailed out, they would have a greater response. A lot of people don't know where to read the notices or where to look for them. A postcard with the times and dates of meetings would be beneficial.

With no further comments heard the meeting was adjourned at 9:20 a.m.